

# Checklist of Needed Coverage for Asthma:

Developed by the Utah Asthma Task Force [www.health.utah.gov/asthma](http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma)

## Hospital Services

- ☐ Inpatient
- ☐ Emergency Department

## Physician's Services

- ☐ Doctor visit
- ☐ Follow-up treatment
- ☐ Specialist
- ☐ Urgent office visit
- ☐ Urgent office visit medications
- ☐ Allergy Testing
- ☐ Immunotherapy (allergy shots)
- ☐ Pulmonary function test in-office

## Preventive Services

- ☐ Flu shot
- ☐ Pneumonia vaccine

## Medications

- ☐ Rescue (bronchodilator)
- ☐ Controllers
- ☐ Antihistamines (if allergies trigger asthma)

## Medical Equipment and Supplies

- ☐ Nebulizer rental, loan, or purchase
- ☐ Peak flow meter
- ☐ Spacer device and/or holding chamber

## Radiology

- ☐ Chest X-ray

## Screenings and Other Services

- ☐ Pulmonary function test off-site
- ☐ Annual follow-up PFT
- ☐ Asthma Education
- ☐ Case Management for severe or complicated asthma

### Things to ask your health plan:

- ☐ What limitations exist for the services on this checklist
- ☐ What would you pay out of pocket
- ☐ Are the things on this list included in coverage
- ☐ Is there a yearly or lifetime maximum benefit?

### Consider the following:

- ☐ What is the likelihood of you or your family needing any particular service on a regular basis
- ☐ What is the degree of coverage in emergency situations.

### Additional and Specialist Services that May be Necessary

- ☐ Methacholine challenge test
- ☐ Histamine challenge test
- ☐ Bronchoscopy
- ☐ New or experimental medications
- ☐ Participating in pharmaceutical research

**Unfamiliar [specialized] asthma terms:**

**Antihistamines** (if allergies trigger asthma): allergy-relieving medications

**Bronchoscopy:** not commonly performed in people with asthma, but can be used to determine the causes of inflammation

**Controller Medications:** medications that prevent asthma attacks from occurring

**Experimental/New Medications:** some health insurance companies do not cover experimental or new medications

**Histamine Challenge Test:** a test to determine how sensitive a person's airways are to allergic triggers

**Holding Chamber:** a device that attaches to an inhaler and allows a person to actuate their inhaler inside the chamber, and then inhale the medication over a period of time. This is especially useful for children who cannot coordinate inhaling with pushing down the canister of the inhaler.

**Immunotherapy** (allergy shots): may be used to treat asthma if there is a strong allergic component to desensitize the individual to that allergen

**Methacholine Challenge Test:** one test that is sometimes used to diagnose asthma. The person inhales methacholine to determine how sensitive their airways are to triggers

**Nebulizer:** nebulizer is machine that turns liquid medicine into a fine mist to be inhaled; if a nebulizer is necessary

**Peak Flow Meter:** a device that measures how well a person is breathing, and is for use at home

**Pharmaceutical Research:** in some cases, participating in pharmaceutical research may disqualify a person from receiving healthcare coverage for their asthma

**Pulmonary Function Test:** a test that determines how well a person's lungs work; not all doctors' offices can conduct pulmonary function tests in their office

**Rescue (bronchodilator) Medications:** medications that can relieve asthma attacks once they have started

**Spacer Device:** a spacer provides space between the inhaler and the throat of the person inhaling the medicine. This allows the medication to reach deeper into the lungs, making it work more effectively.

**Specialist:** pulmonologist or allergy/asthma specialist, doctors that specialize in treating lung diseases including asthma, and allergy-related diseases.

